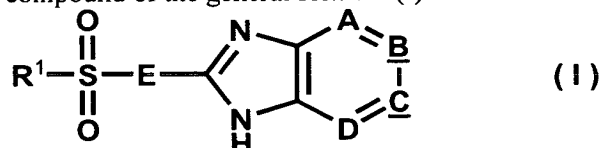


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A compound of the general formula (I):

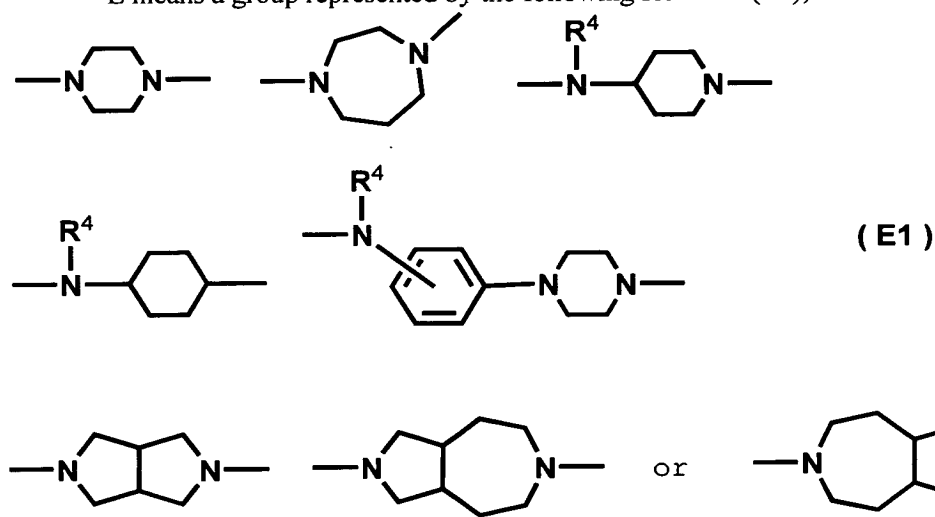


- 5 wherein A, B, C and D each independently mean a methine group or a nitrogen atom, said methine group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₉ cycloalkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyloxy group, a group represented by -N(R²)R³, and a group
10 represented by -Q¹-Ar¹, with at least one of A, B, C and D meaning the methine group;

- Ar¹ means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a nitro group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl group, a lower alkenyl group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylthio group, a lower
15 alkylsulfonyl group, a carboxy group, a lower alkanoyl group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkanoylamino group and a group represented by -Q²-Ar²;

- Ar² means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-
20 lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group;

E means a group represented by the following formulae (E1);

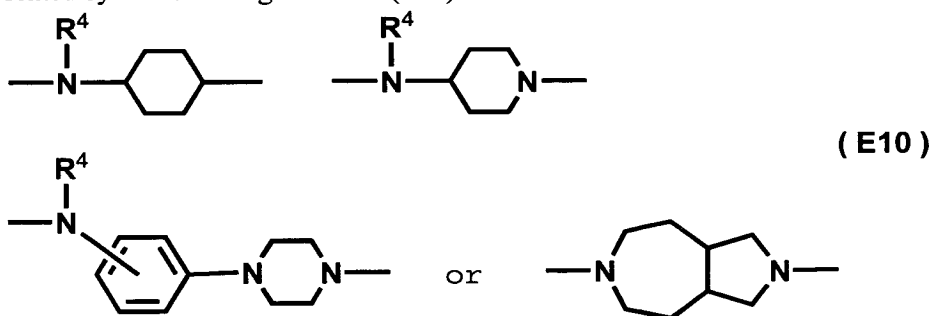


wherein R^4 means a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl group, an aralkyl group or an aryl group; Q^1 and Q^2 each independently mean a single bond, an oxygen atom, a carbonyl group or a group represented by $-N(R^5)-$; R^1 means a lower alkyl group or an aryl group, said aryl group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group, or means a lower alkylene group linked to arbitrary, linkable position(s) of E; and R^2 and R^3 each independently mean a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or are taken together to mean a lower alkylene group which may be intervened by an oxygen atom, a sulfur atom or an imino group; R^5 means a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or a salt or ester thereof.

2. The compound, or a salt or ester thereof as claimed in claim 1, wherein A and D, being the same or different, each is an unsubstituted methine group or a nitrogen atom, and either one of B and C is a methine group having a halo-lower alkyl group or a group represented by $-Q^1-Ar^1$, with the other being an unsubstituted methine group or a nitrogen atom.

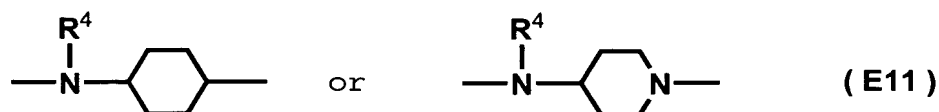
3. The compound, or a salt or ester thereof as claimed in claim 1, wherein A, B and D each are an unsubstituted methine group, while C is a methine group having a halo-lower alkyl group or a group represented by $-Q^1-Ar^1$, or A is an unsubstituted methine group, and B and/or D is/are a nitrogen atom, while C is a methine group having a halo-lower alkyl group or a group represented by $-Q^1-Ar^1$.

4. The compound, or a salt or ester thereof as claimed in claim 1, wherein E is a group represented by the following formulae (E10):



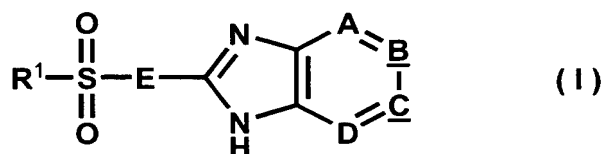
wherein R^4 means a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl group, an aralkyl group or an aryl group.

5. The compound, or a salt or ester thereof as claimed in claim 1, wherein E is a group represented by the following formulae (E11):



wherein R⁴ means a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl group, an aralkyl group or an aryl group.

- 5 6. The compound, or a salt or ester thereof as claimed in claim 1, wherein R¹ is a lower alkyl group.
7. The compound as claimed in claim 1, which is
- 2-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-5-(trifluoromethyl)benzimidazole,
2-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-5-(2-methyltetrazol-5-yl)benzimidazole,
2-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
2-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-5-(2-fluorophenyl)imidazo[4,5-b]pyridine,
8-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-2-(2-fluorophenyl)purine,
8-(cis-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-2-(2-fluorophenyl)purine,
8-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-2-(4-fluorophenyl)purine,
8-(cis-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-2-(4-fluorophenyl)purine,
8-(trans-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-2-phenylpurine,
8-(cis-4-tert-butylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-2-phenylpurine,
5-(2,4-difluorophenyl)-2-(trans-4-isopropylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)imidazo[4,5-b]pyridine,
5-(2,4-difluorophenyl)-2-(cis-4-isopropylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)imidazo[4,5-b]pyridine,
2-(trans-4-methylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
5-phenyl-2-(trans-4-p-tolylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)benzimidazole,
2-(cis-4-methylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
5-phenyl-2-(cis-4-p-tolylsulfonylaminocyclohexyl)benzimidazole,
2-{trans-4-(N-methyl-tert-butylsulfonylamino)cyclohexyl}-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
2-(4-tert-butylsulfonylaminopiperidin-1-yl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
2-(4-tert-butylsulfonylaminopiperidin-1-yl)-5-(2-methyltetrazol-5-yl)benzimidazole,
2-(3-isopropylsulfonyl-cis-3,7-diazabicyclo[3.3.0]oct-7-yl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
2-(4-isopropylsulfonyl-cis-4,9-diazabicyclo[5.3.0]dec-9-yl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
2-(1-isopropylsulfonylpiperazin-4-yl)-5-phenylbenzimidazole,
8-{1-(2-methylsulfonylaminophenyl)piperazin-4-yl}-2-phenylpurine,
5-phenyl-2-{4-(N-phenylmethylsulfonylamino)piperidin-1-yl}-benzimidazole, or
2-{4-(1,1-dioxo-1λ⁶-isothiazolidin-2-yl)piperidin-1-yl}-5-phenylbenzimidazole, or a salt thereof.
8. A neuropeptide Y receptor antagonist agent comprising a compound of the general formula (I):

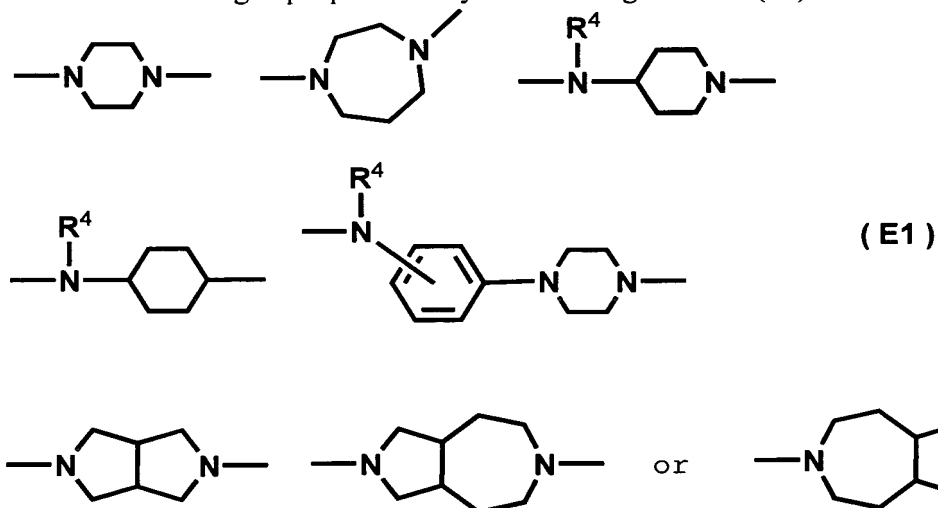


wherein A, B, C and D each independently mean a methine group or a nitrogen atom, said methine group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₉ cycloalkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyloxy group, a group represented by -N(R²)R³, and a group represented by -Q¹-Ar¹, with at least one of A, B, C and D meaning the methine group;

Ar¹ means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a nitro group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl group, a lower alkenyl group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylthio group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a carboxy group, a lower alkanoyl group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkanoylamino group, and a group represented by -Q²-Ar²;

Ar² means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group;

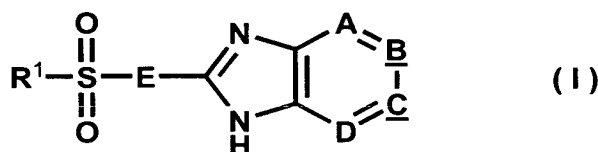
E means a group represented by the following formulae (E1):



wherein R⁴ means a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl group, an aralkyl group or an aryl group; Q¹ and Q² each independently mean a single bond, an oxygen atom, a carbonyl group or a group represented by -N(R⁵)-; R¹ means a lower alkyl group or an aryl group, said aryl group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl

group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group, or means a lower alkylene group linked to arbitrary, linkable position(s) of E ; and R² and R³ each independently mean a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or are taken together to mean a lower alkylene group which may be intervened by an oxygen atom, a sulfur atom or an imino group; R⁵ means a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or a salt or ester thereof as an active ingredient.

9. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of the general formula (I):

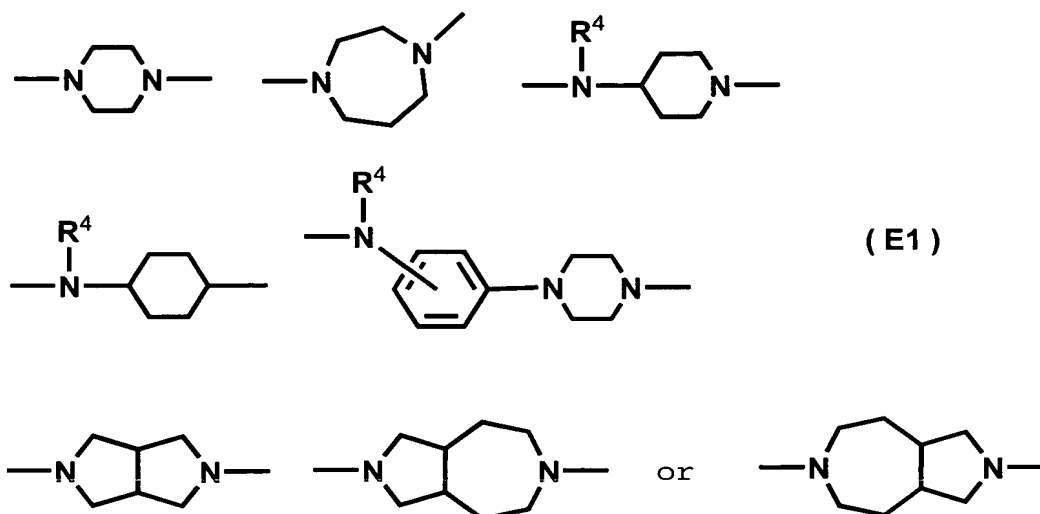


wherein A, B, C and D each independently mean a methine group or a nitrogen atom, said methine group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₉ cycloalkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyloxy group, a group represented by -N(R²)R³, and a group represented by -Q¹-Ar¹, with at least one of A, B, C and D meaning the methine group;

Ar¹ means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a nitro group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl group, a lower alkenyl group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylthio group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a carboxy group, a lower alkanoyl group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkanoylamino group and a group represented by -Q²-Ar²;

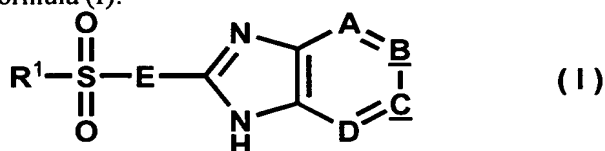
Ar² means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group;

E means a group represented by the following formulae (E1):



wherein R⁴ means a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl group, an aralkyl group or an aryl group; Q¹ and Q² each independently mean a single bond, an oxygen atom, a carbonyl group or a group represented by -N(R⁵)-; R¹ means a lower alkyl group or an aryl group, said aryl group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group, or means a lower alkylene group linked to arbitrary, linkable position(s) of E ; and R² and R³ each independently mean a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or are taken together to mean a lower alkylene group which may be intervened by an oxygen atom, a sulfur atom or an imino group; R⁵ means a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or a salt or ester thereof as an active ingredient.

10. An agent for the treatment of bulimia, obesity or diabetes, which comprises a compound of the general formula (I):



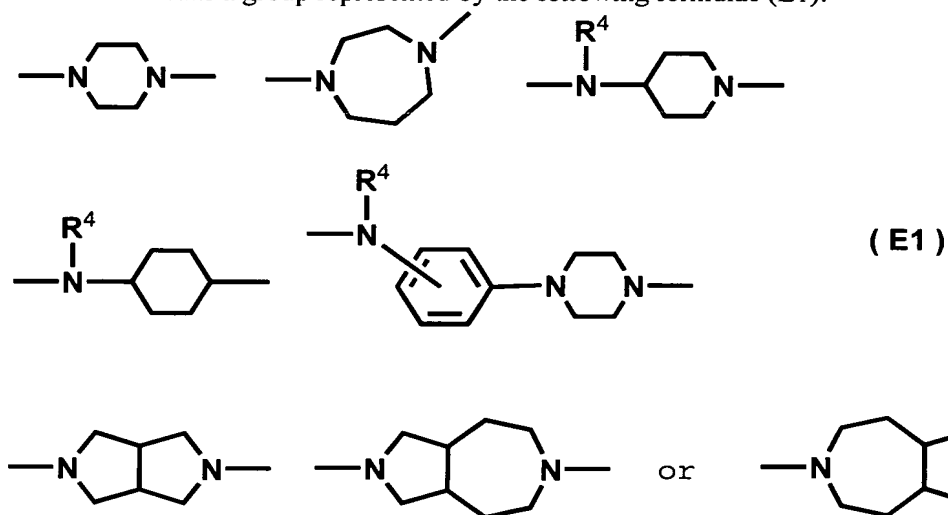
wherein A, B, C and D each independently mean a methine group or a nitrogen atom, said methine group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₉ cycloalkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a lower alkylsulfonyloxy group, a group represented by -N(R²)R³, and a group represented by -Q¹-Ar¹, with at least one of A, B, C and D meaning the methine group;

Ar¹ means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a nitro group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl group, a

lower alkenyl group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylthio group, a lower alkylsulfonyl group, a carboxy group, a lower alkanoyl group, a lower alkoxycarbonyl group, a lower alkanoylamino group and a group represented by $-Q^2-Ar^2$;

Ar^2 means an aryl group or a heteroaryl group, each of which may optionally have a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group;

E means a group represented by the following formulae (E1):



wherein R^4 means a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl group, an aralkyl group or an aryl group; Q^1 and Q^2 each independently mean a single bond, an oxygen atom, a carbonyl group or a group represented by $-N(R^5)-$; R^1 means a lower alkyl group or an aryl group, said aryl group optionally having a substituent(s) selected from the group consisting of a halogen atom, a cyano group, a lower alkyl group, a halo-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy-lower alkyl group, a hydroxy group, a lower alkoxy group, a halo-lower alkoxy group, a lower alkylamino group, a di-lower alkylamino group, a lower alkanoyl group and an aryl group, or means a lower alkylene group linked to arbitrary, linkable position(s) of E ; and R^2 and R^3 each independently mean a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or are taken together to mean a lower alkylene group which may be intervened by an oxygen atom, a sulfur atom or an imino group; R^5 means a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group, or a salt or ester thereof as an active ingredient.